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Contributions of Title III to the Education of Handicapped Children.

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Innovative federal legislation for the handicapped is reviewed, and supplementary guidelines for Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, designed to aid the handicapped, are listed. Four Title III programs are described which benefit the preschool deaf, severely physically handicapped, emotionally disturbed, and trainable mentally handicapped. (JD)

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CONTRIBUTIONS OF TITLE III

TO THE EDUCATION OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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BASED ON A STATEMENT MADE BY

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BEFORE THE

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INNOVATION

JANUARY 1969

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BUREAU OF EDUCATION FOR THE HANDICAPPED

U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

The question raised by many persons concerned with education about the Title III program is, "How did the handicapped get into Title III?" This is a very legitimate question but it defies a simple answer. It is, as our statistical friends say, "a multivariate situation." However, we can identify some of the factors that brought this situation about.

First of all, there has been a quiet revolution going on in this country involving some basic changes in attitudes towards the handicapped child and adult. In the past, there has been a traditional feeling that the handicapped need only receive decent and humane care, be protected from harm and be given a warm comfortable life unmarked by frustrations or challenges. This status was maintained by the "Thanksgiving basket" approach to financial support based on assuaging the guilt feelings of the giver, but offering short lived and inadequate help for the handicapped person. Not an exciting vista--not one we would accept for ourselves. Yet, this condition of life for the handicapped still prevails in many places.

The returning servicemen injured in a variety of conflicts over the last quarter of a century have taught us much about handicaps. We know we have underestimated the adaptive ability of people to their handicaps. For children, underestimation can lead us into unfortunate self-fulfilling prophesies. We predict that the handicapped child will not learn, then we do little to help him and consequently reap negative results.

During the past two decades more and more school systems have adopted an alternative policy, that of seeking to stimulate the maximum potential of these children. Our special education experiences have taught us how responsive these children can be, if we give them a sound education designed by professionals who understand the child and his special problems. Given this help, many children may move from special programs to regular classrooms, and many will become self-sustaining individuals and take their rightful place in the mainstream of our society.

This is the philosophy that supports the new Federal legislation that has been provided for the handicapped, and the Federal educational investment that increased from less than $1 million a decade ago, to more than $100 million in fiscal year 1969. Incidentally, our best estimates of State and local funds spent on special education is around $900,000,000, so you can see that the Federal effort is very much that of a junior partner in the total endeavor. A review of a few Federal legislative innovations might be useful here. There has been authorization for:

. Title VI-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which provides for Aid to the States to help them extend their school programs for the handicapped.

. Amendment to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which allows States and State-supported

institutions to receive help for their educational programs.

. Regional Resource Centers to provide centers to help the child and special teachers with the latest in materials and methods.

. Centers for Deaf-Blind Children to provide new education resources for these multiply handicapped children.

There is a major research and demonstration authority to provide a significant knowledge breakthrough in these special problems.

. P.L. 90-170 that extends training support for over 250 colleges and universities in their efforts to provide trained personnel for our schools.

. A model secondary school for the deaf to be placed here in the Nation's capital.

. Extension of media services to provide special instructional materials to the classroom.

. The handicapped children's Early Education Assistance Act, which will provide for 75 to 100 model centers and demonstration programs to assist States and local communities in expanding their own resources for the early education of handicapped children, by providing exemplary models of early intervention methods.

The establishment of a Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, to administer all such programs in the Office of Education.

Yet, the plans received from the States for Title VI-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, show that fewer than 30% of the over 5,000,000 handicapped children in the United States are receiving special education or related services. There is more than a slight suspicion that the special devices and organizational settings, that we now use, are less than optimum. We need a mandate to seek new innovations and patterns of providing services. We need to draw together the coordination of those services, which we are not now rendering. We need to try out promising new programs just as regular education does.

Viewed from this context, the setting aside of a portion of the funds for Title III for the handicapped is one more meaningful effort on the part of Congress to provide a total program for these youngsters. Title III support of the handicapped will provide, hopefully, the bridge between research and demonstration. It was the perception of the vital need for such linkage that caused interested legislators to seek additional authority to aid handicapped children.

I recently addressed the problem of how one gets from knowledge to action through the successive stages of research, development, demonstration, implementation, and adoption. Title III programs fit easily into the demonstration and implementation phases, which provide

for new ideas and programs to be demonstrated in a school setting in order to be believable. In implementation, local school systems with local needs wish to try out, on a pilot basis, the effective demonstration they have observed elsewhere to establish viability of programs in a local setting.

The coincidence of the 15% requirement for the handicapped at the same time that the Title III funds were suffering a general reduction has made it difficult to begin the administration of this provision. Some of the points made in the special supplement to Title III Guidelines might be reviewed here:

1. Projects for the handicapped will vary. Some projects will be totally devoted to programs for the handicapped, while others will contain only a component. If a project is considered partially for the handicapped, and is to count in terms of the 15% requirement, it must have a <u>specific</u> portion related to this population. For instance, a project for public school children whereby handicapped children are only incidentally involved should not be considered, unless it includes a description of <u>special</u> provisions, techniques, facilities and the number and qualifications of trained personnel planned for the handicapped children.
2. According to Title III Regulations, several aspects of a State plan should deal with special education for the handicapped.

A State Advisory Council for Title III must include persons with professional competence in dealing with handicapped children. The panel of experts selected by States will include experts in the education of the handicapped to review proposals designed to meet the special educational and related needs of handicapped children. The State plan will provide a list-of each of the continuing projects previously funded under Title III which are to be administered by the State educational agency. Projects which are totally, or partially for the handicapped will be so identified. The State plan will also describe the procedures for assuring that at least 15% of Title III funds will be used for:

- Planning innovative, or exemplary programs including pilot projects to meet the special educational needs of handicapped children.
- Establishing or expanding innovative and exemplary educational programs for the purpose of stimulating the adoption of new educational needs of handicapped children.
- Establishing services or activities which utilize new and improved approaches to meet the special educational needs of handicapped children.

3. The plan will explain how funds for such activities will be made available and will be coordinated with funds from other

sources to help the handicapped, including funds available under Title I (P.L. 89-313) and Title VI-A of ESEA.

4. The other provision of the State plan specifically related to the handicapped requires that the State provide assurances that any facilities constructed will be accessible to, and usable by handicapped persons. In developing such plans there will be compliance with the minimum standards contained in "American Standard Specifications for Making Buildings and Facilities Accessible to and Useable by, the Physically Handicapped." (See Title III Regulations, Subpart E Section 118.23.) State plans will be submitted to:

Division of Plans and Supplementary Centers
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Office of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

5. Those parts of the State plan which deal with provision for handicapped children will be reviewed and approved jointly by the Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped.

6. If a State plan fails to meet the requirements of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped that the 15% level will be reached before the end of fiscal year 1969,

the State will then be contacted through the State Title III Coordinator to assist in achieving this level. Each State will be expected to supply a written description of steps taken to achieve the required level. Such negotiations when required, will be conducted by the Division of Plans and Supplementary Centers, Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education, assisted as necessary by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. The Bureau of Education for the Handicapped when requested, will assist local and State education agencies in developing projects and State plans by making available Bureau staff when possible, or by locating in the State or region, competent personnel for such assistance.

We have been heartened by the cooperative spirit that has been shown by the educators in the States, and by the innovative projects they have designed to solve local problems. Here are a few examples of the type of innovational approaches we are now supporting under Title III, which might help others to get the feeling of the new directions we should seek to implement programs for the handicapped.

Operation Springboard

MICHIGAN CITY: Michigan City Area Schools

A model for the development of a statewide program to identify and provide remedial services to preschool deaf children will be

demonstrated in nine geographic regions of Indiana. The Indiana Department of Public Instruction, the State Board of Health, and Ball State University will assist the project through the coordination of their services; an advisory committee representing other interested community agencies will also participate in program development and evaluation activities. Activities will include the identification of preschool hearing handicapped children through regional testing and survey programs, the provision of an 8-week summer training program for teachers of the deaf, and the development of special nursery-kindergarten programs for 200 severely hearing impaired children in selected local school communities. Parental counseling will also be provided by project staff.

A Comprehensive Program for the Severely Physically Handicapped

ROCHESTER: City School District

Health, physical education, recreation, and/or driver education programs will be developed for 114 severely handicapped students. Consultants, orthopedic specialists, and teachers will outline individualized developmental programs, and teacher specialists will implement these activities. Large muscle exercises, recreational activities, and necessary therapy will be included so that each youngster will have a chance to develop to his fullest physical capacity. One room at a local high school will be equipped with specialized sports equipment and another room will have physical

therapy equipment as well as locker and toilet facilities. Three physical education specialists will implement the program.

Behavior Modification of Emotionally Disturbed Children

GREAT FALLS: School District No. 1

To control deviant behavior that frequently results in learning difficulties, the student will be motivated to perform well in the low-interest classroom, so that he may have more time to spend using his own initiative in another specially equipped and furnished high interest area. A psychiatric social worker and a psychologist will assist the classroom teacher in identifying children with behavior problems. Once the children are identified, an intensive program will be developed that includes specific curriculum materials, audio-visual aids, and training in special self-contained classrooms. Regular evaluation of the child's behavior will be provided in an overall effort to help the student return to regular classroom routines as soon as possible.

Preparing Trainable Retardates for Sheltered Employment

AMITE: Tangipahoa Perish School System

Diagnostic and evaluative services, preschool training, special education classes, activities centers, and a sheltered workshop will be provided for trainable mental retardates. The staff of Southeastern Special Education Center will help to provide identification and evaluation services in addition to developing new techniques to measure student progress.

A preschool age day-care center will be observed and evaluated as a basis for an individualized training program. Five special education classes will be established for the trainable mentally retarded to continue the basic training after they have reached school age. The program will be individualized to prepare the children for participation in a sheltered workshop. Two activity centers will be developed for trainable retardates who cannot tolerate the discipline of workshop activity, but can adjust to a less demanding atmosphere. A sheltered workshop will begin initial activity with contracts for simple services solicited from within the local area.

There are many other fine examples I could cite. But the need for new approaches is still great and Title III offers a unique opportunity for this need to be met for handicapped children as well as for education in general.

History tells us that as professions develop and mature they tend to break into various specialties. We can see these clear trends in medicine, law and other professions. Education is now experiencing the development of specialties such as special education as a means of handling some of its special and expanding problems. This trend is unlikely to reverse and go towards the generalist direction, because there is just too much for one person to learn.

However, the development of specialties carries with it a responsibility to integrate one's specialty into the total educational effort. Title III with its close commitment to regular education, and its provision of resources for special education provides us with that kind of opportunity, if we can but use it wisely.